

Posted by u/Mad_Mechanic_ Human 4 hours ago

The Mercenary.

OC OC

Gods know how much we hated the Andarii.

We'd been contesting urban centers that they had captured for nearly a hundred cycles. We had been mortal enemies ever since we arose from our respective homeworlds.

An unending war that none could even remember the cause of.

The human was a mercenary. Bipedal, and no real defining features other than the strength of a deathworlder and a refusal to remove their gasmask in the presence of others. We didn't care. An extra gun was an extra gun.

But today seemed different, the usual bloodthirst of the creature was replaced by a sombreness that we couldn't understand. They suddenly refused to fight and instead they sat in their little foxhole singing something in their language. Every now and then they scanned the enemy trenchline as if searching for something. Everyone assumed this to be a sort of preparation for them going berserk.

We couldn't have been more wrong.

At around midday, I went to check in on the human, genuinely worried now. To my surprise I found it wiring up a Holographic projector and a speaker to it's mobi-deck. When I asked it what it was doing, it returned a simple answer: "Watch me."

So that's what I did.

First, it began to play a song across the battlefield with the same tune as the one it had previously been singing. Then it displayed twelve characters above our trenchline facing the enemy trench. We assumed it was a way to demoralise the enemy.

Once again, we couldn't have been more wrong.

Soon after the little Human had displayed it's message and started playing it's music, something strange happened. The enemy trench began playing the same song and displayed the same message.

I didn't think a creature as stocky as a human could run that fast, nor clear a trenchwall that easily. But that's what it did, and immediately began walking toward the middle of the no man's land, completely oblivious to the artillery and gunfire around it.

On the other side of the trench, another figure was also crossing the no man's land. It was another human.

Both sides ceased their fire when we saw this, not wanting to disturb what we thought to be an invocation of ritualistic single combat.

Once again, we were wrong.

When the humans met, we watched them through scopes and drones, the snow lightly falling around us. And what do you think they did? They started throwing clumps of snow at each other. We were stunned. What manner of single combat involved attacks that wouldn't even injure a gardenworlder, let alone a deathworlder. Eventually the two humans stopped and appeared to be discussing something, before turning and running back to their respective trenches.

I remember the human clearing our trench in a single bound. It almost immediately began hacking away at a tree in the forest, and when the tree had fallen, the human picked it up and carried it back to the no man's land.

The other human had returned with two logs and a shovel. As our human began digging a hole to place the tree into, the second human set up a campfire with the two logs around it.

At this point, our curiosity was getting the better of us and every soldier in our trenchline began marching over to the two odd little humans with their tree and campfire. The enemy was doing the same.

To our surprise, the two humans were sharing stories and generally just having a good time when we got there. When we asked our human what in the name of all things sacred it was doing, it responded with the words that history remembers to this day: "Cheer up old chap, grab a seat and join the festivities"

I tell you, I'm not sure what form of ancient magic the humans had invoked but both sides made peace that day. Tanks became sitting places, gunships became kitchens and the sounds of death were replaced with laughter and camaraderie. The song of the two humans was mimicked by both sides, although I'll be the first to admit that we did so poorly.

Gods know we hated the Andarii, and Gods know that it was a mistake to do so. I just wish that it hadn't taken thousands of years for a human to show us that.

- excerpt from a speech given by elder Al'klast'a. The speech was given on Federation Day, the yearly anniversary of the unexpected ceasefire between Andaria and Tsur that resulted in the end of a millenia long conflict and the formation of the strongest Federation known to the Gakaxy. On the federation homeworld there is a statue of two humans sitting around a campfire, and ingraved in the base if the statue are the very words that were displayed on that fateful day:

"December 25th"